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MARSTON'S WORKS:

CONJECTURAL READINGS.

By K. DEIGHTON.

LONDON:
GEORGE BELL & SONS.

1893.

Price One Shilling.

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MARSTON'S WORKS: CONJECTURAL READINGS.

Although Bullen's edition of Marston is a vast improvement upon that by Halliwell, there still remains a large number of passages admittedly corrupt. The following conjectures are an attempt to restore the original text. In some instances I feel considerable confidence as to the soundness of my suggestions: others again are more doubtful or less important. I give the former first.

Antonio and Mellida, part ii., i. 2. 128–133: *—

Balurdo, "a rich gull," is relating a dream he has had. "For methought I dreamt I was asleep, and methought the ground yawned and belkt up the abhominable ghost of a misshapen simile, with two pages; the one called master, even as going before; and the other mounser, even so following after; whilst Signor Simile stalk'd most prodigiously in the midst."

On this Bullen remarks, "Balurdo is talking arrant nonsense." Not so. Punctuate as follows, and it will be seen that Balurdo is (for him) talking excellent sense:—"The one called master 'even as,' going before; and the other mounser (*i.e.* monsieur) 'even so,' following after; whilst Signor Simile stalk'd most prodigiously in the midst."

The Malcontent, v. 1. 9.

Bilioso, "an old choleric marshal," is boasting of his prowess. "When Monsieur Gundi lay here ambassador, I could have carried a lady up and down at arm's end in a platter; and I can tell you, there were those at that time who, to try the strength of a man's back and his arm would be coistered."

Of "coistered" no other instance has been found in English literature. Reed suggests that the word may be derived from Old French *coister* = *incommoder*, or from *coiter* = *presser*, *inciter*. Nares thinks the meaning may be "coiled up into a small compass."

* The references are to Bullen's edition, 3 vols., 1887.

Halliwell, *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, gives "Inconvenienced" (*Fr.*). *But these are all unhappy guesses.* Read "hoistered," an Essex word meaning "supported," "held up," an extension of "hoisted," as "hoisted" is an extension of "hoised."

~~*The Malcontent*, v. 1. 213.~~
The Fawn, v. 1. 210.

"A statute made in the five thousand four hundred threescore and three year of the easeful reign of the mighty potent Don Cupid, emperor of sighs and protestations, great king of kisses, archduke of dalliance, and sole loved of her, for the maintaining and relieving of his old soldiers, maim'd or disabled in love."

The second edition gives "sole loved of him." Read "sole *lord* of *hymen*," "hymen" being often spelt "himen." Note the gradation of titles from "emperior" to "lord," and compare *What You Will*, iii. 3. 6–8, "Emperor of Cracks, Prince of Pages, Marquess of Mumchance, and *sole* Regent over a Bale of False Dice." Both passages are founded upon *Love's Labour's Lost*, iii. 1. 182–188, in which nearly all the titles used by Marston are ascribed to Cupid:—

> "This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid:
> *Regent* of love-rhymes, *lord* of folded arms,
> The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
> Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
> Dread *prince* of plackets, *king* of codpieces,
> *Sole imperator* and great general
> Of trotting 'paritors."

Sophonisba, i. 2. 76.

> "*Asd.* Hannibal, our ancor is come back; thy slight,
> Thy stratagem, to lead war into Rome
> To quite ourselves, hath now taught desperate Rome
> T' assail our Carthage: now the war is here."

For "ancor" Bullen substitutes "rancour," observing, "Old eds. 'ancor,' an obvious misprint. The meaning is our rancorous hatred of the Romans has recoiled on our own heads." But "ancor," the older and more correct spelling of "anchor," is undoubtedly sound, and the meaning is "the anchor to which our vessel of state trusted (*sc.* the stratagem of carrying the war into the enemy's country) has given way, has failed to take hold of the bottom." Compare Camillo's words, *The Winter's Tale*, i. 2. 213, 4, in reference to the difficulty Leontes had in persuading Polixenes to stay:—

> "You had much ado *to make his anchor hold*,
> When you cast out, *it still came home*."

Sophonisba, iii. 1. 63.

"*Syphax.* Zanthia, Zanthia!
Thou art not foul, go to; some lords are oft
So much in love with their known ladies' bodies
63. That they oft love their vailes: hold, hold, thou'st find
To faithful care kings' bounty hath no shore."

Bullen reads, "That they oft love their—Vails: hold, hold," &c., and remarks, "Old eds. 'That they oft love their vailes: hold,' &c. If the text is not corrupt, we must suppose that a sentence breaks off at the word 'their.' Marston is fond of employing the horrid figure aposiopesis. 'Vails' is intelligible on the supposition that Syphax is feeing the waiting-woman." He is no doubt doing so, perhaps with kisses as well as money, but the obvious correction is "That they oft love their *maids*."

What You Will, i. 1. 119.

"I will craze my brain
But I'll dissever all. Thy hopes unite."

Read,

"But I'll dissever all thy hopes unite."

i.e. I will dissever all that your hopes unite.

What You Will, ii. 2. 134.

"They live and eat, and sleep, and drink, and die,
And are not touched with recollections
134. Of things o'er past, or stagger'd infant doubts
Of things succeeding."

Read, "or stagger'd *in faint* doubts," &c.

What You Will, iv. 1. 96, 7.

"He capers the lascivious blood about
Within heart-pants, nor leaps the eye nor lips;
Prepare yourselves to kiss, for you must be kiss'd."

Read,

"He capers, the lascivious blood *without*,
Within heart-pants, *now* leaps the eye, *now* lips," &c.

The reference is to the presumptuous lover, Laverdure, who is cock-a-whoop with the certainty of winning his mistress, and the meaning, 'he frisks about in his exultation, the glow of anticipated triumph causing his cheeks to burn, his heart beating wildly in his breast, his eye and lips betraying ecstasy at the thought of the amorous encounter for which he is coming.'

What You Will, iv. 1. 140–6.

Lampatho, the bashful student, salutes the assembled ladies.

"*Lamp.* Bless you, fair ladies! God make you all his servants!
Meletza. God make you all his servants!
Quadratus. He is holpen well had need of you; for be it spoken without profanism, he hath more in his train. I fear me you ha' more servants than he: I am sure the devil is an angel of darkness."

This, as it stands, seems to me stark nonsense. Read therefore, "for, be it spoken without profanism, *if* he hath more in his train, I fear me you have more servants than he," &c., with the meaning, 'He (*sc.* God), who has many nominal attendants ("is holpen well"), needs you sadly; for, if I may say so without profanity, if he has more who nominally follow in his train, I fear you have more devoted servants, and among those servants I may reckon the devil, who, as an angel of darkness, is well suited to your service." In "servants" there is, of course, an allusion to the old sense of 'devoted admirers.'

What You Will, iv. 1. 179–83.

The student, Lampatho, abjures all study.

"Lamp-oil, watch-candles, rug gowns and small juice,
Thin commons, four o'clock rising,—I renounce you all.
Now may I 'ternally abandon meat,
Rust, fusty, you which most embraced disuse,
You ha' made me an ass."

Read,

"Now, *my* eternally abandon'*d* meat,
Rust fusty you *with* most *enforc'd* disuse."

The Insatiate Countess, i. 1. 97.

"You're virtuous, man; nay, let me not blush to say so."

This, Bullen's reading, seems to me pointless. The edition of 1613 gives "Your vertues man:" that of 1613, "Your vertues may."

Read, "Your virtues *wan me;* let me not blush to say so;" and compare Fletcher, *The Custom of the Country*, iii. 2, where the equally "insatiate" Hippolyta solicits the obdurate Arnoldo,

"You make me fonder:
You have a virtuous mind; I want that ornament."

The Insatiate Countess, ii. 3. 28–34.

Abigail is showing to her friend, Thais, an insulting love-letter which she has received from that friend's husband; Thais having

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The Fawn, iii. 1. 214.

"*Dul.* Because I love him; and because he is virtuous I love to marry him.

Phil. His virtues!

Dul. Ay, with him, his virtues.

Phil. Ay, with him! alas, sweet princess, love or virtue are not of the essence of marriage.

Dul. I jest upon your understanding! "I'll maintain that wisdom in a woman is a most foolish quantity."

For "I jest," read "Ay, pest." The second edition, which Bullen follows, gives "A jest;" the first, "I jest;" the third, "I rest." As is well known, "ay" was of old usually written "I."

The Fawn, iii. 1. ~~254.~~ 354

"Why, I did know you feigned."

Read,

"Why I did know *he* feigned."

The Fawn, iii. 1. 521, 2.

"Divinest woman, thou perfection
Of all proportion's beauty, made when Jove was blithe."

Read,

"Divinest woman, thou perfection,
Proportion's beauty, made when Jove was blithe."

The Fawn, iv. 1. 397.

"Yet I hope a man of wit may prevent his own mishap, or if he can prevent it"—&c.

Read, "if he *can't* prevent it."

The Fawn, iv. 1. 605.

"With constant virtue, best feign'd chastity."

Qy. "best-sign'd." Compare *H. VIII.*, ii. 4. 108, "You *sign* your place and calling, in full seeming, with meekness and humility."

The Fawn, v. 1. 406.

"I remember when I was a young man, in my father's days, there were four gallant spirits, for resolution, as proper for body, as witty in discourse, as were any in Europe, nay, Europe had not such; I was one of them."

Read, "four *as* gallant spirits for resolution, as," &c., omitting the comma after "spirits."

Sophonisba, i. 2. 12.

"I hate these figures in locution,
These about phases forced by ceremony."

Read, "These *about-faces*:" "figures in locution" suggest to the speaker figures in dancing.

Sophonisba, i. 2. 83, 4.

"Desire, fear, and hope receive no bond
By whom, we in ourselves are never but beyond."

Does this mean "Desire, fear, and hope, by whose agency, prompted by which, we are never within rational limits, but always out of our orbits, acknowledge no restraint?" If so, the comma after "whom" should be removed and placed after "never." If not, I see no sense in the passage.

Sophonisba, i. 2. 167–9.

"'Twas I lost the fight;
My choice vexed Syphax, enraged Syphax struck
Arm's fate; yet Sophonisba not repents."

For "Arm's fate" Bullen conjectures "Arm'd hate." I think the reading in the text is correct, and that the metaphor is that of deciding the fate of arms by a sudden blow on the scale which held the fortune of the Carthaginians.

Sophonisba, i. 2. 228.

"Nature made all the rest of thy fair sex
As weak essays, to make thee a pattern
Of what can be in woman."

Read, "to make *of* thee a pattern."

Sophonisba, ii. 2. 71.

"O my king,
My uncle, father, captain, O over all."

Read,

"My uncle, father, captain over all,"

the "O" having been caught from the line above.

Sophonisba, iii. 1. 147.

"Close the vault's mouth lest we do slip in drink."

For "slip," read "sleep": Vangue has just been given "a carouse" and is afraid of sleeping on his watch. A few lines lower he says, "I am very sleepy."

Sophonisba, iii. 2. 7–9.

"Know, best of lords,
It is a happy being, breath well famed,
For which Jove sees these thus."

Bullen says, "The text is corrupt. 'Sees *me* thus' (*i.e.* sees me grateful), 'sees the thus' (*i.e.* incense), and 'sees this use' (*i.e.* interest of thanks) are alike unsatisfactory." Quite so. But I think the text is sound, and that the meaning is "For whom Jove sees these," *sc.* "being" and "breath," to be thus, *sc.* "happy" and "well famed." Compare above, ii. 1. 135–7.

"Nor are you vile
Because the gods forsee; for gods, not we
See as things are; things are not as we see."

Sophonisba, iii. 2. 73.

"Before then Syphax join
With new-strength'd Carthage, or can once unwind
His tangled sense from out so wild amaze,"

For "amaze," read "a maze:" "unwind" and "tangled" show this, I think.

Sophonisba, v. 3. 36, 7.

"Help,—help to bear
Some happiness, ye powers! I have joy to spare."

Bullen reads "bar," which he says the sense clearly requires. I would retain "bear," and read "Such" for "Some."

Sophonisba, v. 3. 89.

"How near I was unto the curse of man. Joy!
How like was I yet once to have been glad."

Read,

"How near was I unto the curse of man—joy!

i.e. to joy which is the curse of man."

What You Will, Induction, l. 54.

"I wonder what tight brain
Wrung in this custom to maintain contempt
'Gainst common censure."

Possibly "*Rung* in," though perhaps "tight" is against the alteration.

What You Will, Induction, l. 106.

"I'll not stand it; may chance recoil, and be not stuffed with saltpetre."

Probably "'t may chance recoil and 't be stuffed," &c.

What You Will, Induction, l. 111.

"*Phil.* Genteletza, the women will put me out.
Dor. And they strive to put thee out, do thou endeavour to put them."

Read, "to put them *in*."

What You Will, Prologue, l. 15.

"That can as soon slight of as find a blemish."

Read, "slight *off*."

What You Will, i. 1. 102.

"'Tis foully writ, slight wit, cross'd here and there,
But where thou find'st a blot, there fall a tear."

For "fall," read, I think, "fell."

What You Will, ii. 2. 90.

"Facundius, and elaborate elegance make your presence gracious in the eyes of your mistress."

Read, "facundious," and omit comma.

What You Will, ii. 2. 170.

"O, hold, hold! at that
They're at brain-buffets, fell by the ears amain
Pell-mell together."

Possibly, "They at brain buffets fell by the ears," &c., though "They're" may represent "They were."

What You Will, iii. 2. 93.

"The tailors, starchers, sempstres, butchers, poulterers."

Read, "poulters," as the word was commonly spelt.

What You Will, iii. 2. 117.

"Sest, I'll to Celia."

Probably "Pest," and so in iv. 1. 362.

Eastward Ho! iv. 1. 43.

"Poor man, how weak he is! the weak water has washed away his strength."

Qy. delete the second "weak."

The Insatiate Countess, i. 1. 108.

"That fame-insatiate devil jealousy."

Read,

"That *same* insatiate devil jealousy."

The Insatiate Countess, iii. 2. 46.

"Nature did rob herself when she made him,
Blushing to see her work excel herself;
'Tis shape makes mankind femelacy."

Perhaps, "'Tis shape makes mankind's *simulacracy*," *i.e.* it is form that makes men worshipped as though they were idols.

The Insatiate Countess, iv. 5. 17.

"Bawds to lust and murder,
Be all propitious to my act of justice
Upon the scandalizers of her fame,
That is the life-blood of deliciousness,
Deem'd Isabella, Cupid's treasure,
Whose soul contains the richest gifts of love."

Qy. "*Queen'd* Isabella," *i.e.* Queen-like. Somewhat similar is "*Kingdom'd* Achilles," *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3. 185, and the dramatists abound in adjectives in *-ed* formed from nouns and often mistaken for participles. Bullen proposes "Dear" or "Divine," both of which seem equally tame, while it is improbable that even the perverse ingenuity of copyists or compositors should have substituted "Deem'd" for either of such ordinary words. "Queen'd" would be a word unfamiliar to them, and they might easily substitute a word like "Deem'd" which was familiar enough to them.

The Insatiate Countess, iv. 5. 22.

"*Sago.* Who's there?
Mass. — A friend to thee, if thy intents
Be just and honourable.
Sago. Count Massino, speak, I am the watch.
Mass. My name is Massino: dost thou know me?
Sago. Yes, slanderous villain," &c.

I believe the words "Count Massino" should be omitted. That Sago does not recognise Massino till he declares himself, is evident from the words "I am the watch," which Sago uses in order to make Massino give his name; for, upon his doing so, Sago at once fiercely attacks him with every epithet of vituperation, and declares his intention of killing him. It is no objection to this that upon Massino's asking "Dost thou know me?" Sago replies "Yes," for he merely means that he knows Massino from what Isabella had said

of him. Note that by omitting the words "Count Massino" the metre of the line becomes perfect; also that there is certainly corruption in the passage since the old editions give "Rogero" for "Massino," and prefix "*Rog.*" to his speeches.

The Insatiate Countess, v. 1. 4.

"Don Sago, quakest thou not to behold this spectacle—
This innocent sacrifice, murder'd nobleness—
When blood, the maker ever promiseth,
4. Shall though with slow, yet with sure vengeance rest."

For "rest," read "*rise.*" The corpse of Massino, murdered by Sago, has just been brought in, and the reference is to *Genesis*, iv. 10, "The voice of my brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

The Scourge of Villainy, iii. 11. 54.

"Of *counter times, fincture*s, sly *passatas.*"

Qy. "Of *counter times, punturas*, sly *passatas.*"

The *punta* or *punto* is constantly mentioned in company with the *passata* or *passado*, and probably the form *puntura* is here used, or we might read "of *puntas.*" Bullen takes "finctures" (for which the metre halts) as = feints, but admits that he can find no other instance of the word.

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